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Atari Online News, Etc.
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->From the Editor’s Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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The presidential race is getting more interesting as time starts to wind down, especially for the GOP candidates! Ted Cruz, in an act of political despeation, taps Cary Fiorina as his running mate. Will the move attract support? Perhaps the move will attract some women voters disenfranchised with Trump, but I doubt anything will be significant. The Cruz-Kasich "alliance" is also another move that reeks of desperation.

And on the Democrat side, we’re continually bombarded with more of Hillary’s BS. I’m really enjoying seeing Bernie Sanders take votes away from her, winning state after state primaries even though he’s not winning enough to take the nomination. Will that change, who knows.

However this all pans out, it’s going to be a presidential election for the history books!

Until next time...

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FireBee News Update (Kind of)

By Fred Horvat

Not much has been going on with me and the FireBee the past couple of weeks. One thing I did in the last couple of months is migrate from an older Mac Pro computer running OS X 10.7.5 to a newer Mac Pro running the latest OS X 10.11.4. I knew from reading on Atari-Forum.com that running Aranym would be much fussier to get set up properly but once up and running it would be fine. Just that I would most likely want to have a single Aranym system running and not 5 or 6 like on the older Mac Pro.

Well I finally got around to trying Aranym out on the newer Mac Pro. I copied my main setup to a folder off of root on the boot drive. I then launched Aranym and the Aranym Setup Menu came up

which has never come up before for me. One of the options was to load the Config file for Aranym. I located the Config file in the folder and loaded it. There was no option on the Setup menu to Start Aranym and the Reboot but was greyed out so I could not just load the Config file and Reboot. I said Close and Aranym started booting but the program almost immediately ended. I tried again going through the Aranym Setup checking the options to verify that they were correct and they appeared to be but every time I started Aranym it quit immediately. I checked the version of Aranym I was running and it was a couple of years old. On the new Mac Pro I am running the latest Mac OS X so I decided to download the newest Aranym from http://aranym.org/download.html

I downloaded and replaced the older version of Aranym with the latest Version 1.0.2. I got the usual first time of running Aranym prompt for my Mac Password. I believe this is for authorizing the networking functionality on the Mac. I got the Aranym Setup Menu and selected the Config file and selected Close. Aranym booted up and ran fine! I ran Netsurf and Highwire and networking also worked fine. I shutdown FreeMiNT to exit Aranym properly. Then I ran Aranym again selecting the Config File then Close to boot and at the TT RAM Memory testing Araynm quits. I went back and tried again checking the Config File and it appeared correct. But no matter how many times I try and boot Aranym it will pass the ST RAM Memory Test but fail as the TT RAM Memory Test starts. Just as a test I reinstalled the latest version of Aranym and I was again prompted for my Mac OS X password and Aranym booted and ran fine! Shut down and go and launch Aranym it will fail at the TT RAM Memory Test. So right now I am at a loss as to why if the Aranym binaries are fresh it will run and after the first attempt it will not. I looked at the Crash Logs in the Console on the Mac and so far nothing there makes any sense to me. I have not posted my problem with Aranym yet on http://www.atari-forum.com yet. Maybe someone has gone through this already with the latest Mac OS X and has a solution to the problem.

Until next time.

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - When Will Nintendo Announce The NX?
  """"""""""""""""""""""""""""""" Bushnell Creating Games Again!
                                   World of Warcraft Compromise for Fans!
                                   And much more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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So When Will Nintendo Actually Announce The NX?

Until today, I felt pretty confident about what the near future looked like for Nintendo: the company was going to give us our first concrete details on their upcoming console, codenamed NX, at E3, ahead of a holiday 2016 release date. That s out the window now: the NX is coming out way March 2017 in an ostensible delay, and Nintendo is remaining mum about the thing at the big show in LA. Nintendo, as always, does things differently. There s no reason to assume March is a terrible time to release a console it gets the news cycle to itself but it is certainly an unorthodox one.

It makes me wonder when we ll actually hear more about the thing. It seems likely that Nintendo will do some sort of supercharged version of a Nintendo direct this is likely the biggest news the company will have ever announced in one of those, but the system is in place, and I can t really see why Nintendo wouldn t use it. A full scale press conference isn t out of the question, however. Right after E3 is a possibility: the late summer is a dead time for games, and people might get themselves an announcement hankering after the rush of E3. Then again, if Nintendo has delayed this announcement because it doesn t feel it will be ready to show at E3, there s no saying it will be ready in time to squeeze between June and September.

That leads us to fall, again a very strange time to announce a console. People will have their attention turned towards a suite of new fall releases, as well as possible new consoles from Sony, Microsoft, or both. If Nintendo is hoping a March release will give it access to gamers full attention, a fall announcement wouldn t quite work. That would nix September, October, and November.

My best guess for a genuine announcement of the Nintendo NX would be in December, right after the grand fall wave of releases when the faithful are already starting to look forward to next year. Get into 2017 and we don t really have enough time to build excitement in the right way, but December hits a nice little midground. There s really no rulebook for releasing a modern console in March, so it s going to be interesting to see how the big N handles this whole thing. As usual, Nintendo does it a little different.

Forget The Nintendo NX Delay: The Real Problem Is, Where Are All The Great New Games?

Nintendo announced that its next game console, the long-teased NX, won’t emerge until March 2017. And no one will be able to see it at at the upcoming and increasingly less relevant E3 Expo in Los Angeles in June. Instead, according to a Nintendo press statement this morning, the new hardware will be unveiled "later this year."

I don’t care that the Nintendo NX is being delayed. I have a Nintendo Wii U at home, and it’s my family’s favorite game

console. The Nintendo 3DS is my favorite non-phone gaming handheld.

But I do mind, very much, actually, that Nintendo's game library seems to be slipping. The quality, and even quantity, of games feels like it's in decline. And for a company that's already faced some rough times, it's not acceptable. Not for me.

Nintendo's always had weird, backwards, borderline self-destructive hardware ideas. The first Nintendo DS with its two screens and stylus seemed like a practical joke. The GameCube's tiny micro-disc drive wasn't even compatible with CDs or DVDs. I won't discuss Virtual Boy, the quasi-virtual black-and-red 3D game system that may well have been decades ahead of its time when it was released in 1995, but flopped nonetheless.

With every Nintendo hardware generation, good games have made the consoles worth buying. Fantastic DS games made that system a massive success, with over 154 million units sold to date. The same was true of the original Wii.

Even the Wii U ended up being something I loved playing - and my son, too - because of the games. Super Mario 3D World, Super Mario Maker, Splatoon. What comes next? A new Zelda, but it won't be here till next year alongside the new NX. The recent Star Fox Zero was something between "just fine" and a total disaster, depending upon whom you ask. I can't see anything else on the horizon.

New hardware, when it comes from Nintendo, is always a step behind in some regards like graphics. But the best ideas have been concepts several steps ahead, like motion controllers on the Wii and second-screen gaming on the DS, 3DS and Wii U.

The Wii U, as a piece of hardware, is fine. It hasn't hit its peak yet. The real problem is the deep lack of continual high-quality games. The Nintendo 3DS is old, but it's not ancient. And there are still plenty of classic Nintendo games that never made it to the 3DS but could.

The Wii U isn't competing with the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One. But I don't think a Nintendo NX would be, either. I'd rather Nintendo get its new platform right than rush it and fail.

I've always wanted Nintendo to get into mobile, but I hated Miitomo. Its pop-up-plagued micro-transactional style is, to me, an anti-fun anti-game. I'm not confident that either of Nintendo's next mobile games - mobile versions of Fire Emblem and Animal Crossing coming later this year - will be any good, either. Will they really be games, or just marketing efforts? I've wanted Nintendo to make mobile games for years, especially Animal Crossing. But all of a sudden, it feels like Nintendo's console games have gone into a dry spell while the mobile goods haven't yet arrived.

Taking a half-step isn't the right move. I'd like great mobile Nintendo games, or great Nintendo 3DS and Wii U games. But I don't see much of either this year besides the new Fire Emblem. I'd rather see no Nintendo mobile games at all if it meant one

or two more Wii U or 3DS games worth playing. Can Nintendo do both and not make it feel strained?

I feel like I write an impassioned plea for Nintendo to straighten up and fly right at least once a year. But for now, the current wish list is:

I'd like the Nintendo NX to fuse handheld and console, if it means one less thing to buy. Take 3DS and Wii U, mix together. It would be a system I could take on the go. My favorite Wii U games get left behind while I play a completely different set of 3DS games. That's not great.

One Netflix-like subscription model for older games. Take all those throwback titles and create access across the Nintendo NX, Wii U, 3DS and maybe even mobile. One service, multiple ways to play. I've said this for years, and it needs to happen.

VR optional. Maybe, at some point, Nintendo explores VR. I hope it's an add-on to the NX and not an entirely new platform after that. Nintendo needs to stay committed to NX after what's been a short Wii U run, so extra peripherals need to stem from it.

Backwards compatible, please. I'm sure NX will play old Wii U games, but I hope 3DS is somehow supported if it's a handheld. There are too many good games, and they could at least be offered as digital downloads.

And yeah, make some great mobile games. But really good ones. Animal Crossing (a real version). Pushmo. Mario Picross. Start with any of these. Or, any older games. The underrated Art Style games from years ago. But don't let these games distract. Great games on Nintendo hardware, please. And fast.

World of Warcraft Considers Compromise for Fans

The studio behind World of Warcraft has responded to a petition asking it to run a server for the original version of the video game.

Blizzard Entertainment no longer operates servers for the original WoW so some gamers have set up their own.

The company said giving its blessing to pirate servers would damage its legal rights, but was considering adding a stripped-back realm to appease fans.

One former WoW developer called for the original game to be "preserved".

World of Warcraft is an online multi-player game in which players explore a vast landscape, complete quests and interact with other gamers.

At its peak in 2010, World of Warcraft attracted almost 12 million subscribers, but the game today attracts about five million paying customers.

The original game from 2004 has since been updated with new instalments that some players say have materially changed the experience of the game.

Some fans have set up their own servers to play the original, "vanilla" WoW although the practice is technically illegal.

On 10 April, a popular fan server known as Nostalrius, with 150,000 active members, was closed after the threat of legal action by Blizzard Entertainment. It sparked a petition which has attracted 240,000 signatures.

"The honest answer is, failure to protect against intellectual property infringement would damage Blizzard’s rights," Blizzard wrote in a forum post.

"There is not a clear legal path to protect Blizzard’s intellectual property and grant an operating licence to a pirate server."

Due to the nature of intellectual property law, turning a blind eye to pirate servers would make it difficult for Blizzard to challenge other abuses of its franchise in the future.

The firm added that it could not operate its own server for the original game "without great difficulty", but said it was considering whether opening a "pristine realm" within the latest game would appease fans.

A pristine realm would simulate some aspects of the gameplay in the original WoW within the latest edition of the game.

"In essence that would turn off all levelling acceleration including character transfers, heirloom gear, character boosts, Recruit-A-Friend bonuses..." the company wrote.

"We aren’t sure whether this version of a clean slate is something that would appeal to the community and it’s still an open topic of discussion."
Image copyright Mark Kern/YouTube
Image caption Former WoW developer Mark Kern printed the 240,000 name petition

The suggestion received a mixed reaction from fans on WoW message boards.

"I would love the idea of a pristine server updated to current WoW that you could build a community around without being stuck in the old game," said one player.

But other fans were critical: "From a personal stance, a pristine realm isn’t even what I want. Nothing in a pristine realm fixes the major issues of retail WoW for me."

Another added: "When you actually start listing all the improvements to the game since vanilla, you see why it should stay dead... the sheer amount of people clouded by nostalgia is staggering."

The closure of fan-run servers such as Nostalrius has highlighted the difficulty in preserving modern video games for historical record.

On Tuesday, game developer Mark Kern who worked on the original WoW, said: "WoW is an important game, it’s part of gaming history, but there’s no legal way for people to enjoy its earlier versions or see where it all came from.

"Unlike the old days, they can’t just boot up a floppy disk or slip in a CD-Rom.

"The original game is gone from the world forever and legacy servers are the only way to preserve this vital part of gaming culture."

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Atari 7800 Engineer Reflects on Losing The American Console Market to Nintendo

"In 1986, Atari finally decided what the hell let’s sell the 7800, and it actually did quite well competing against the Nintendo NES but it was two years late. It makes me wonder what the industry would have done if the 7800 had come out when it was planned, and what it would have done for Atari."

- Steve Golson, veteran game designer and engineer

In 1984, before the Nintendo Entertainment System had made it to the West, Atari announced plans to launch a brand-new console for the holidays: the Atari 7800 ProSystem (pictured).

The 7800 was the first major Atari game system designed by an outside company (General Computer Corporation, who also designed arcade game enhancement kits like Super Missile Attack), and in a recent interview with USGamer, former GCC engineer Steve Golson describes how the console’s launch wound up being delayed long enough for the NES to beat it to market -- and how the world might have been different if it hadn’t.

"Atari did this huge unveiling here’s our next-generation base unit for Christmas of ’84," recounts Golson, who in addition to his work on the 7800 and other projects is well-known in the game industry as the engineer behind Ms. Pac-Man.

"If it’s for Christmas, you’ve got to have it out in spring time so all the toy retailers can put in their orders, so it was going to be the huge big thing for Christmas of ’84. We had 14 cartridges that we had designed, and a high score cartridge which

was a really cool way of saving your high score from one day to the next, and there was going to be a computer keyboard peripheral, and it was going to be amazing."

Trick is, Atari’s computer and console divisions were sold by parent company Warner later that year to Commodore founder Jack Tramiel, who made significant cutbacks that included cancelling the 7800’s launch.

Atari eventually brought it out anyway, in 1986, and reportedly saw decent sales - but by then the NES had established a foothold in the U.S. market and Atari was outpaced in the console game business.

"I think so many in the industry didn’t realize that a new generation of gamers was going to appear. The toy industry is so driven by fads, that in 1984 they thought the gaming fad was over, and they did not see it was going to come back," says Golson. "So kudos to Nintendo for bringing out the NES. But you look back and think, if only the 7800 had actually come out on time."

For more of Golson’s thoughts on how the game industry (and GCC’s role within it) was shaped in the ’80s and ’90s, as well as some good anecdotes about taking Atari to court, check out the full USGamer interview.

http://www.usgamer.net/articles/steve-golson-interview-the-story-of-ms-pac-man-the-atari-7800-and-the-hyperdrive/page-2

New World Record For Donkey Kong Arcade

We don t cover world record attempts very often (with streaming there are too many to keep track of unless you made a job out of it) but some are higher profile than others, especially when one in particular had a documentary made about it almost 10 years ago, that being Nintendo s Donkey Kong. Since the King of Kong made headlines, various other attempts have been made at the world record, big tournaments have been organized surrounding the game, drama has occurred between players with accusations flying over various things that I don t care to get into, all in the effort to push that top score higher. Last night the bar was raised once again with gamer Wes Copeland coming away with the new record of 1,195,100 points (the screen doesn t show the digit for million since the score rolled over after 999,999):

The attempt was streamed on Twitch and I imagine it will be posted to Wes s Youtube channel soon. Congrats on the new score, that is not an easy feat.

Upcoming WR Attempt on Centuri s The Pit (thanks to Casey G. for the tip on this) I received a link about an upcoming world record attempt on May 1st for a game that is vastly more obscure than Donkey Kong, Centuri s The Pit. While not many people are familiar with the game, they are familiar with the concepts that it pioneered in subsequent games like Digger, Dig Dug or Boulder Dash. It is a very challenging game and currently has a world

record of 165,000 points. More info can be found on this thread at the KLOV Forums. James Hudson will be making the attempt, which you can watch live on Youtube on May 1st.

Atari Founder Bushnell Jumps Into Mobile With Spil Games

Forty years after Atari founder Nolan Bushnell tapped Steve Jobs to create arcade game "Breakout," a mobile games publisher is returning the favor.

Bushnell is collaborating with Spil Games, a publisher located near Amsterdam, to create five to eight mobile apps. The first one is expected in early 2017, and the rest will likely hit over the course of the next year or so, Bushnell said in an interview with CNBC.com.

Since leaving Atari in 1978, Bushnell has helped start or been involved with numerous tech businesses focused on robotics, education and anti-aging games. Bushnell said that over the past 15 years, he’s designed about 30 games, both single player and player to player, but without ever looking to get them on the market.

That changed when he noticed recently that Supercell’s "Clash of Clans" generates millions of dollars in revenue a day thanks to its popularity on smartphones. The global digital games market grew 8 percent last year to $61 billion, according to SuperData Research.

Bushnell started looking for the right team to help turn his ideas into apps and landed on Spil, which has over 100 million monthly active users and focuses on casual games.

"I talked to them and decided that they had a corporate culture that was very similar to Atari when I was leaving great people with a fun attitude," Bushnell said. "They’ve got really good stuff, great analytics and a really good understanding of marketplaces."

Bushnell said he’s been stealthily working with Spil for about six months and plans to visit the company every other month. The rest of his input will come over Skype and in helping fine-tune apps after the Spil team develops prototypes.

Spil’s titles include"Operate Now," "Sara’s Cooking Class" and "Crash Drive 2," and are available on Apple’s iOS platform as well as Android devices and the web.

"Our team has the right skills and track record working on multimillion-dollar franchises," Spil CEO Tung Nguyen-Khac said in an e-mailed statement. "We’re stoked to be working with Nolan and feeding off his energy and creativity."

Bushnell, 73, has come a long way since Atari created electronic tennis game "Pong" in 1972 and distributed it to bars and bowling alley arcades. Four years later, a 21-year-old Steve Jobs, who had joined Atari in 1974, was tasked with developing

"Breakout," described as "'Pong' turned on its side," but with the added flare of colored blocks that players tried to hit with a virtual ball.

For help, Jobs turned to his future Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak, who at the time worked for Hewlett-Packard. Jobs earned $5,000 for his efforts and paid Wozniak $350.

"I would gladly have designed the 'Breakout' game for Atari for free, just to do it," Wozniak later wrote on his website. "I thought that Atari was one of the most important companies in the world and it was an honor to be close to them."

Later that year, Bushnell sold Atari to Warner Communications, and in 1978 Bushnell was fired over disagreements with management regarding the direction of Atari.

In developing mobile games for the first time, Bushnell is angling to avoid the drama of corporate life. He's not an employee just a collaborator. The way Bushnell sees it, this partnership presents a fun challenge, and he doesn't currently have a company to run.

"I had a little bit of time," he said. "A lot of times I make decisions because things just seem right."

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

MIT Builds Artificial Intelligence System That Can Detect 85% of Cyber Attacks

What if we could Predict when a cyber attack is going to occur before it actually happens and prevent it? Isn't it revolutionary idea for Internet Security?

Security researchers at MIT have developed a new Artificial Intelligence-based cyber security platform, called 'AI2,' which has the ability to predict, detect, and stop 85% of Cyber Attacks with high accuracy.

Cyber security is a major challenge in today's world, as government agencies, corporations and individuals have increasingly become victims of cyber attacks that are so rapidly finding new ways to threaten the Internet that it's hard for good guys to keep up with them.

A group of researchers at MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL) are working with machine-learning startup PatternEx to develop a line of defense against such cyber

threats.

The team has already developed an Artificial Intelligence system that can detect 85 percent of attacks by reviewing data from more than 3.6 Billion lines of log files each day and informs anything suspicious.

The new system does not just rely on the artificial intelligence (AI), but also on human input, which researchers call Analyst Intuition (AI), which is why it has been given the name of Artificial Intelligence Squared or AI2.

The system first scans the content with unsupervised machine-learning techniques and then, at the end of the day, presents its findings to human analysts.

The human analyst then identifies which events are actual cyber attacks and which aren't. This feedback is then incorporated into the machine learning system of AI2 and is used the next day for analyzing new logs.

It's simple:

"The more data it analyzes, the more accurate it becomes."

In its test, the team demonstrated that AI2 is roughly 3 times better than similar automated cyber attack detection systems used today. It also reduces the number of false positives by a factor of five.

According to Nitesh Chawla, computer science professor at Notre Dame University, AI2 "continuously generates new models that it can refine in as little as a few hours, meaning it can improve its detection rates significantly and rapidly. The more attacks the system detects, the more analyst feedback it receives, which, in turn, improves the accuracy of future predictions that human-machine interaction creates a beautiful, cascading effect."

The team presented their work in a paper titled, AI2: Training a big data machine to defend [PDF], last week at the IEEE International Conference on Big Data Security in New York City.

So, let's see how AI2 helps create The Internet the safer place and how long it will take to be implemented into large-scale security platforms in the near future.

US Government Wants Your Facebook Data - Without You Knowing

The government wants to get more and more information out of Facebook, but they don't want you to know about it.

The social network's latest "Global Government Requests Report," released Thursday, documented a 13 percent rise in government requests for Facebook user data in the second half of 2015 over the previous period. In total, governments asked for Facebook user data a total of 46,763 times in the last six months of 2015.

The report also shed light on government gag orders, with Facebook revealing that 60 percent of requests from US authorities came with a "non-disclosure order" prohibiting Facebook from notifying the user in question.

Facebook also receives requests to block material for violating local laws in particular countries. One photo related to the November 2015 Paris terror attacks was subject to more than 32,000 block requests from the French government.

Facebook said in a statement it doesn't provide "back doors or direct access to people's data." The company added: "We scrutinize each request for user data we receive for legal sufficiency, no matter which country is making the request. If a request appears to be deficient or overly broad, we push back hard and will fight in court, if necessary."

China Wants Apple's Source Code, But The Company Refused

Apple officially confirmed that the Chinese government has asked Apple twice in the past two years to hand over the source code for its operating system, but the company refused in both the cases.

In a Tuesday hearing entitled "Deciphering the Debate Over Encryption: Industry and Law Enforcement Perspectives," the police officials put allegations on Apple for handing over user data to Beijing while refusing the authorities at its home in the US.

However, speaking under oath at the congressional hearing, Apple's General Counsel Bruce Sewell denied the claims, saying "We have been asked by the Chinese government" for the source code behind the iPhone. But, "we refused."

The response came just after Indiana State Police Captain Charles Cohen accused Apple of providing its source code to China.

Neither Captain Cohen presented any evidence of his allegation, nor he claimed to know whether this was accurate. Instead, he cited media reports to prove his point.

"I saw several news stories that said Apple provided the source code for the iOS [operating system for iPhone and iPads] to China," Cohen said without pinpointing the publications.

The allegations on Apple have continued due to the company's refusal to help the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) gain access to the iPhone used by the San Bernardino shooter Syed Farook.

The law enforcement officials have started accusing Apple of handing over its users information to the Chinese government for business purpose while refusing to cooperate with U.S. authorities for access to private data in criminal and terror investigation.

However, Apple’s Swell apparently said: "We have not provided source code to the Chinese government. We did not have a key 19 months ago that we threw away. Those allegations are without merit."

On one hand where authorities want Apple to provide them access to valuable data in serious crimes, like terror, deaths, and rapes. On the contrary, technical experts argue that if the company creates a hole in its security, it will open all its customers to not just the government but also the potential hackers.

However, when it comes to complying with government request in serious crimes, Apple has provided data in 80 percent of cases originating from law enforcement in North America and 66 percent from China.

It was previously reported that in the wake of its legal battle with the US Department of Justice, Apple was working on encrypting iCloud backups that only the account owner would have access.

However, Mr. Sewell denied the reports, saying the company had made no such announcements about iCloud encryption plans. Moreover, such moves would further frustrate law enforcement agencies, who now can obtain iCloud data with a court warrant.

Twitter Takes Another Step to Crack Down on Abuse

It s just the last effort to curb harassment.

Twitter has added a way for users to report multiple abusive tweets at the same the time, marking one more incremental step by the microblogging service to crack down on harassment.

Until now, Twitter users could only report tweets individually, which made it difficult to fully convey an abusive situation. This update makes it easier for you to provide us with more information about the extent of abuse and reduces the time it takes to do so, Twitter safety engineer Hao Tang said in a blog post. That added context often helps us investigate issues and get them resolved faster.

Users were already able to report an abusive account, although the new feature makes it faster. Previously, users couldn t attach any tweets when reporting an account, which meant that Twitter s safety team had to ask for additional information after a report was submitted or look for the abusive tweets themselves, a Twitter spokeswoman explained to Fortune. The new ability to attach multiple tweets as part of the initial reporting process will make it faster. But even with the new system, all the tweets reported at once must be from the same account.

Twitter has long been criticized for failing to aggressively police harassment on its service. Last year, then-CEO Dick Costolo acknowledged and took full responsibility for the company s shortcomings in an internal memo.

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We re going to start kicking these people off right and left and making sure that when they issue their ridiculous attacks, nobody hears them, he wrote.

But so far, Twitter s improvements have been slow and incremental, and still lack any significant means for users to protect themselves such as prohibiting others from including their user handle in their tweets, for example. Monday s update is a small step, but it s a step.

Dangerous Windows 10 Flaw Lets Hackers Secretly Run Any App on Your PC

A newly identified Windows 10 security flaw lets hackers install malicious apps on any machine, without business owners being made aware anything out of the ordinary is happening. The issue lets anyone familiar with Windows security bypass its defenses without leaving any trace on the machine.

Discovered accidentally, the issue is significant, and Microsoft is yet to issue a patch.

Found by Casey Smith, the Windows vulnerability doesn t affect only Windows 10 machines. Malicious hackers could take advantage of the security flaw on enterprise versions of Windows dating back to Windows 7.

The issue concerns a program called Regsvr32 (and Regsvr64 for 64-bit machines), which lets anyone execute code on a Windows computer from remote network locations. The flaw doesn t trigger the AppLocker security software, which is supposed to only let users run apps from trusted sources, and it doesn t leave any traces in the registry, as it doesn t need administrator access.

In other words, pretty much anyone could use it to install and run any application on an unsuspecting employee s Windows machine. Microsoft has not yet provided a fix for the issue, but users can disable the Regsvr program using Windows Firewall.

More details on Smith s findings are available at the source links, including proof of concept scripts to demonstrate the security issue.

Samsung’s Artik 10, A Challenger to Raspberry Pi 3

Samsung will start shipping its eight-core Artik 10 board computer next month, a challenger to the Raspberry Pi 3.

The Artik 10 was first announced last year and could be a PC replacement if you don’t mind building out your own system. It could also spawn the development of smart appliances, drones, robots and other gadgets. Like the Raspberry Pi, its components

are crammed onto a small circuit board.

The Artik 10 will be available from online retailer Digi-Key starting in May, Samsung officials said.

Pricing wasn't immediately available, but the Artik 10 could end up being more expensive than the $35 Raspberry Pi 3, and even the $99.99 Artik 5, a smaller Samsung board for wearables and small gadgets that started shipping in February.

The Artik 10's eight-core, 32-bit ARM CPU has some horsepower, but it still seems dated compared to the 64-bit quad-core ARM CPU on the Raspberry Pi 3. Samsung's latest smartphones have 64-bit processors, but it still opted for older technology on the Artik 10.

The CPU has four Cortex-A15 cores, which handle the most demanding tasks, and four lower-power Cortex-A7 cores for lighter use.

The Artik 10 has better graphics than the Raspberry Pi 3. Its Mali T628 MP6 graphics processor can show HD video at 120 frames per second, while the Raspberry Pi 3 can handle HD video at 60 frames per second.

The new Artik board has 16GB of flash storage and 2GB of LPDDR3 memory, both greater than on the Raspberry Pi 3. It also has USB ports.

Artik also has wireless capabilities and expansion ports to connect external sensors, cameras, displays and other components. Key features include 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi, Zigbee and Bluetooth. It has GPIO, UART, I2S, I2C and SPI connectors. The Raspberry Pi 3 does not have Zigbee, which is used for point-to-point communication between sensor devices.

With Artik, Samsung wants to tap into the fast-growing Internet of Things market. Gartner late last year predicted 6.4 billion connected devices will be used worldwide in 2016, and that number will reach 20.8 billion by 2020. Samsung wants to get its memory, processors and other components in more of those connected devices.

Samsung also has a grand plan to equip homes with Internet-connected appliances like refrigerators, ovens, washing machines and bulbs starting next year. The Artik boards will help enthusiasts develop and test products that could fit in such environments, said Curt Sasaki, vice president of ecosystems at Samsung, in an interview.

The Artik boards will also connect to the Artik Cloud service, an open platform through which a wide range of devices will be able to talk to each other. Artik Cloud was announced at the Samsung Developer Conference being held in San Francisco this week.

The Artik Cloud could be used for applications in security, health, driver assistance, and home and industrial automation. For example, users could store information in the Artik Cloud about the temperature at which their air-conditioner should turn on and off.

Last year, Samsung also announced a small development board called the Artik 1, but it won’t be sold to enthusiasts. It’ll she directly to manufacturers looking to make products such as smart bulbs, Sasaki said.

Artik will come with a version of Linux for embedded devices.

This Tiny Computer Has No Battery, Powered Wirelessly from Radio Waves

No matter how smart and fast your devices would be, the biggest issue is always with the battery technology.

Whenever you go to buy any electronic gadget smartphone, laptop, or any wearable the most important specification isn t its processor speed or its camera quality but its Battery Backup, which is not getting better any time soon.

What if you could eliminate the very thing entirely?

Well, that’s exactly what the electrical engineers from the University of Washington has developed.

A team of researchers from the University of Washington s Sensor Lab and the Delft University of Technology has developed a new gadget that doesn t need a battery or any external power source to keep it powered; rather it works on radio waves.

So, this means you have to turn on your radio every time to keep this device charged. Right?

No, you don t need to do this at all, because the device sucks radio waves out of the air and then converts them into electricity.

Dubbed Wireless Identification and Sensing Platform (WISP), the device is a combination sensor and computing chip that uses a standard off-the-shelf RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) reader to suck in radio waves and convert them into electricity.

Though the WISP is not designed to compete with the chips in your computer or even your smartphone, it has as much processing power as the Fitbit, which is enough to run sensors and transmit data.

The discovery could highly transform the Internet of Things (IoT) world as the WISP is even more low maintenance compared to Bluetooth Low Energy sensor chips being used today.

The next step in making the WISP usability even more convenient and easy is to create Wisent that would allow for wireless programming of the WISP. For this, the team has recently collaborated with the Delft University of Technology.

With the help of Wisent, the WISP can be programmed wirelessly and uses the very same radio waves to communicate.

"So far WISP required cables to reprogramme it, nullifying the advantage of battery-less-ness. Therefore, we present Wisent, a protocol that allows WISP to be reprogrammed wirelessly," said Przemyslaw Pawelczak, assistant professor at the TU Delft s Embedded Software group.

"Our vision is to have truly wirelessly reprogrammable software-defined battery-less computers wherever and whenever we want."

For more details, you can head on to the research paper. Though the ultimate aim of WISP is in fully realizing the Internet of Things and giving "dumb" objects some smartness, it might even find its way into smartphones as a sort of emergency backup calling module that works even when your phone s battery is dead.

However, there is no detail on when the WISP will be made available for purchase, or how much it will cost.

The Digital Assistant Cortana Has a One-Track Mind: Microsoft

You can ask the latest desktop version of Cortana, Microsoft Corp. s digital assistant, to find the nearest Pizza Hut but don t expect it to use any search engine but Microsoft Bing or present the results in any browser but Microsoft Edge.

Cortana no longer can use non-Microsoft browsers or search engines in fulfilling user requests on Windows 10, the software giant said in a blog post Thursday. The restrictions are reminiscent of earlier company moves that once led the U.S. Department of Justice to sue Microsoft for violating antitrust violations.

Cortana uses Bing and Edge by default. However, browser extensions offered by third parties have allowed users to force the Windows 10 version of Cortana to use the browser or search engine of their choice. In addition, Alphabet Inc s Chrome browser and Mozilla Foundation s Firefox search engines let users bypass Edge and Bing.

An update of Windows 10 released Thursday locked in Cortana s default choices.

Unfortunately, as Windows 10 has grown in adoption and usage, we have seen some software programs circumvent the design of Windows 10 and redirect you to search providers that were not designed to work with Cortana, Ryan Gavin, the general manager of search and Cortana, wrote in the blog post. The result is a compromised experience that is less reliable and predictable.

Cortana offers a better user experience when used with Edge and Bing, the company said. For instance, a search for Pizza Hut in the Cortana box displays not only the food vendor s website but also the nearest locations. A search for Best Buy in the Cortana box yields not only the electronics retailer s website but also discount coupons for items it sells.

Microsoft can t deliver such extra features "if Cortana can t depend on Bing as the search provider and Microsoft Edge as the browser, Mr. Gavin wrote.

Tying Edge and Bing to Cortana could disadvantage Microsoft s rivals in browsing and search, most notably Google and Mozilla Foundation s Firefox. Google recently added to Chrome a feature that lets users redirect Windows 10 desktop searches, including those from Cortana, to Google. Firefox, too, has a feature that shunts Cortana s Bing searches to another search engine. Microsoft s update disabled those features.

Google declined to comment. Officials from Mozilla didn t immediately respond to a request for comment.

Similar workarounds have been available in the form of browser extension software. Theo Browne, a junior at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, created one such program, Chrometana. The Windows 10 update disabled that, too.

 I m outraged that Microsoft can act this way without blowback, Mr. Browne said.

He compared the decision to restrict Cortana to Microsoft s services to moves the company made in the 1990s, when it first bundled its Internet Explorer browser into Windows and crushed the upstart Netscape Navigator browser. In 2000, a federal judge ruled that Microsoft was a predatory monopolist that violated antitrust laws.

Microsoft ultimately settled the dispute, which included a consent decree that, in part, barred the company from retaliating against PC makers that installed non-Microsoft programs. The consent decree expired in 2011.

Much has changed since then. Microsoft is battling rivals that have at least as much market firepower in the emerging market of virtual assistants. Google can use its dominant search engine to bolster Google Now. At the same time, Apple has put Siri in the palms of iPhone users. Google Now and Siri, which predate Cortana, rely solely on their company s browser.

Such differences in the marketplace may trump concerns about Microsoft s monopoly status.

 The mere fact that there is a new kid on the block with a lot of horsepower is not enough to conclude that Microsoft s actions are anticompetitive, said Herbert Hovenkamp, a professor at the University of Iowa College of Law. This is more a fight among giants rather than Microsoft going against Netscape.

While Windows remains the dominant operating system for personal computers, Google and Apple dominate in operating systems for mobile devices. That is why Microsoft offered versions of Cortana for Google s Android and Apple s iOS last fall. But even on those devices, Cortana uses Bing to answer queries.

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